

Translation

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PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT/EP2003/013824



PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference Meerwasserentsalzung	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/EP2003/013824	International filing date (day/month/year) 06 December 2003 (06.12.2003)	Priority date (day/month/year) 21 December 2002 (21.12.2002)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC B01D 3/10		
Applicant KBH ENGINEERING GMBH		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.
 This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).
These annexes consist of a total of _____ sheets.
3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:
 - I Basis of the report
 - II Priority
 - III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
 - IV Lack of unity of invention
 - V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
 - VI Certain documents cited
 - VII Certain defects in the international application
 - VIII Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 05 July 2004 (05.07.2004)	Date of completion of this report 16 August 2004 (16.08.2004)
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/EP	Authorized officer
Facsimile No.	Telephone No.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/EP2003/013824

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

the international application as originally filed
 the description:

pages _____ 1-15 _____, as originally filed
 pages _____ _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

the claims:

pages _____ 1-22 _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, as amended (together with any statement under Article 19)
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

the drawings:

pages _____ 1/3-3/3 _____, as originally filed
 pages _____ _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

the sequence listing part of the description:

pages _____ _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
 These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language _____ which is:

the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
 the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
 the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

contained in the international application in written form.
 filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
 furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
 furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
 The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
 The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

the description, pages _____
 the claims, Nos. _____
 the drawings, sheets/fig. _____

5. This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rule 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/EP 03/13824

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**1. Statement**

Novelty (N)	Claims	1-22	YES
	Claims		NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	1-22	YES
	Claims		NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	1-22	YES
	Claims		NO

2. Citations and explanations

The closest prior art document FR-A-2 493 171 describes a vacuum distillation process in which the evaporator is connected to a common vacuum source via a condenser. In contrast, claim 1 of the present application specifies an essential new feature whereby negative pressure is applied to the evaporator and the condenser separately before they are connected. The new feature makes it possible to achieve a high degree of evacuation and hence high evaporator performance at low temperatures. LU-A-45940 describes the use of a common vacuum source for an evaporator and a condenser, and does not contain anything that might suggest the new feature claimed in the present application. Claim 1 presents a non-obvious alternative and therefore meets the requirements of PCT Article 33(2) and (3). The same applies to independent claim 8, which defines a device that is particularly suitable for carrying out the claimed process. The industrial applicability of the invention seems clear (PCT Article 33(4)).